

Durham E-Theses

A Comparison of Stave Churches and Pre-Christian Cult-Houses, Their Origins and Influences

TOMPSEN, LYLE

How to cite:

TOMPSEN, LYLE (2020) *A Comparison of Stave Churches and Pre-Christian Cult-Houses, Their Origins and Influences*, Durham theses, Durham University. Available at Durham E-Theses Online:

<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/13505/>

Use policy

The full-text may be used and/or reproduced, and given to third parties in any format or medium, without prior permission or charge, for personal research or study, educational, or not-for-profit purposes provided that:

- a full bibliographic reference is made to the original source
- a [link](#) is made to the metadata record in Durham E-Theses
- the full-text is not changed in any way

The full-text must not be sold in any format or medium without the formal permission of the copyright holders.

Please consult the [full Durham E-Theses policy](#) for further details.

Academic Support Office, Durham University, University Office, Old Elvet, Durham DH1 3HP
e-mail: e-theses.admin@dur.ac.uk Tel: +44 0191 334 6107
<http://etheses.dur.ac.uk>



Fig. 107 The ninth century Forsa Ring. Photo source: <<http://www.archeurope.com/index.php?page=the-forsa-rune-ring-photo>> [Accessed 7 November 2011].



Fig. 108 Norwegian Iron Age carved wooden poles from Rebild Skovmose, Norway.
Photo source: Glob 1965: Figure 71, 183.

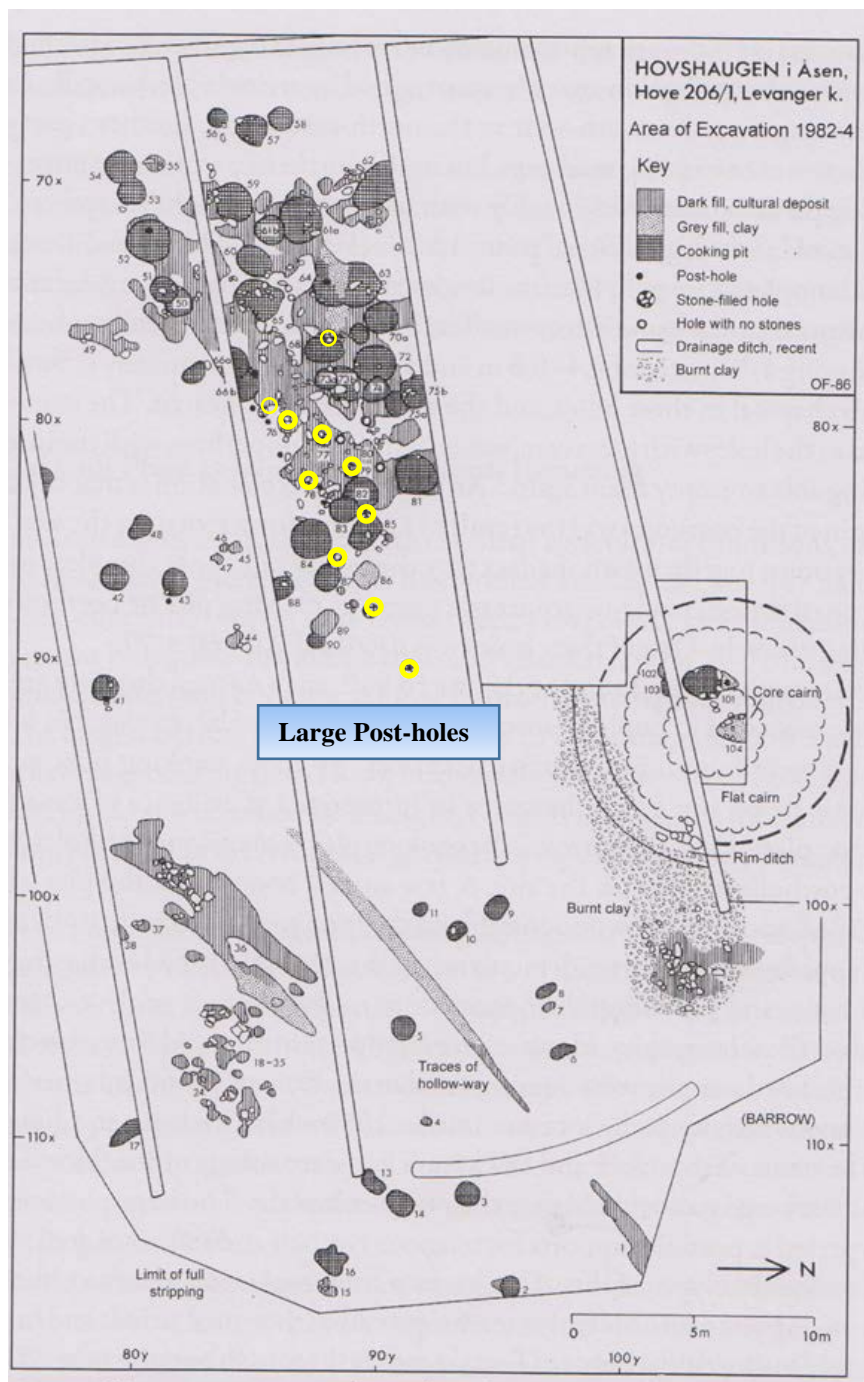


Fig. 109 Hovshaugen site, Norway. Source: After Farbregd 1986, secondary source Walaker Nordeide 2011:106



Fig. 110 Present day (Gamla) Uppsala site. The mounds are visible in the horizon line, the church purportedly built on top of the temple can be seen in the background on the right

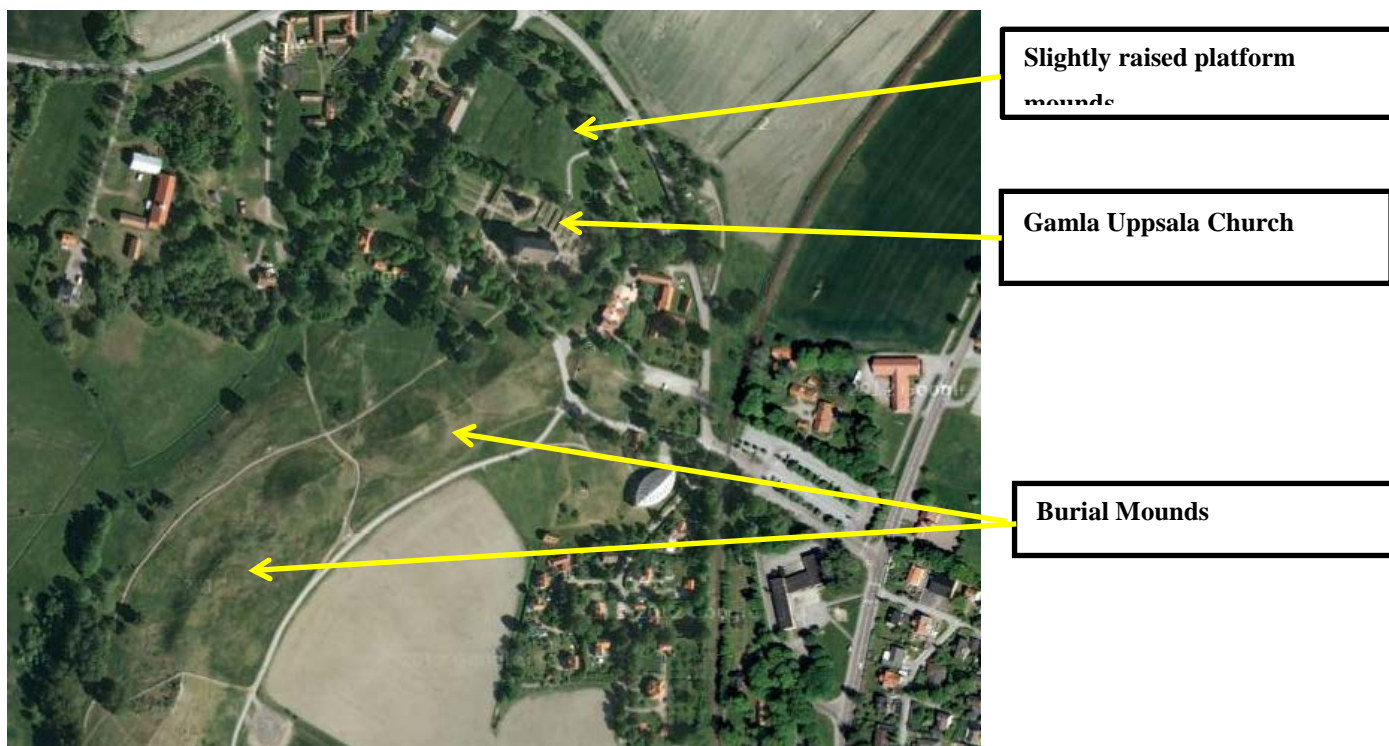


Fig. 111 Aerial view of the Uppsala site.

Source:

<http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&nfpr=1&q=gamla+Uppsala+satellite+view&bav=on.2,or.r_qf.&bvm=bv.43828540,d.aWc&biw=980&bih=599&um=1&ie=UTF-8&sa=X&ei=QbJEUcTMLIa9yGH89YDABA&ved=0CAgQ_AUoAg> [Accessed 19 February 2013]



Fig. 112 Gamla Uppsala Kyrka (2012).



Fig. 113 Model of Uppsala temple based mainly on Adam's description. GUHC

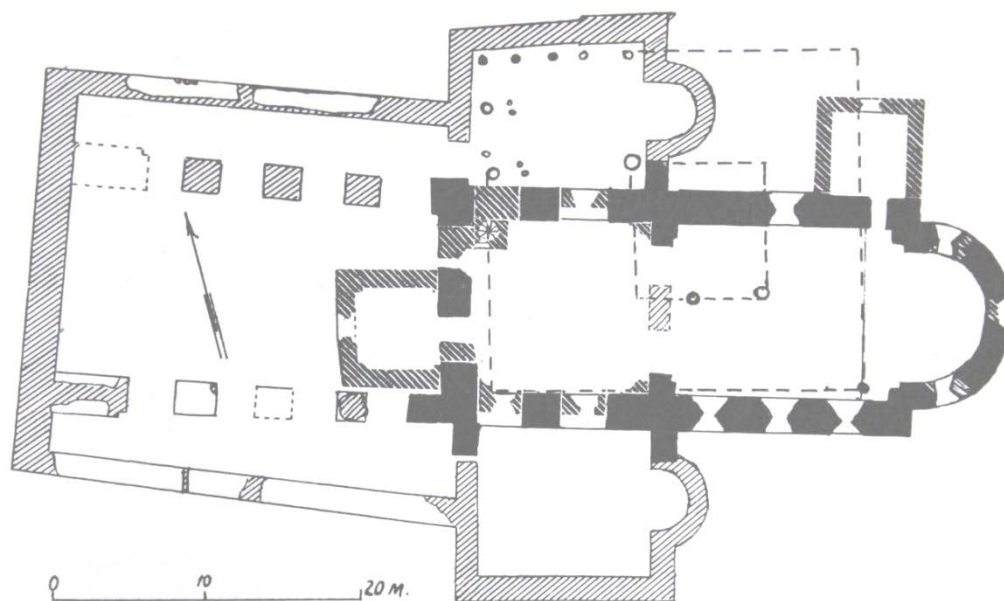


Fig. 114 Excavation plans of the church and attempted temple reconstruction. The purported temple (the square pattern on the right) is based on the Wendish temple at Arkona. Source: Lindqvist 1927: 651-53.

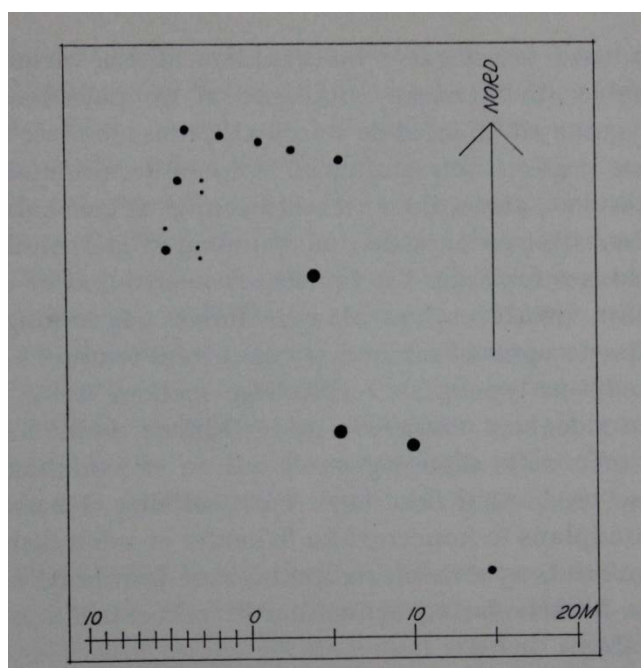


Fig. 115 Uppsala post-holes. Removing the temple outline makes this identification much more questionable. Source: Olsen 1966: 141.

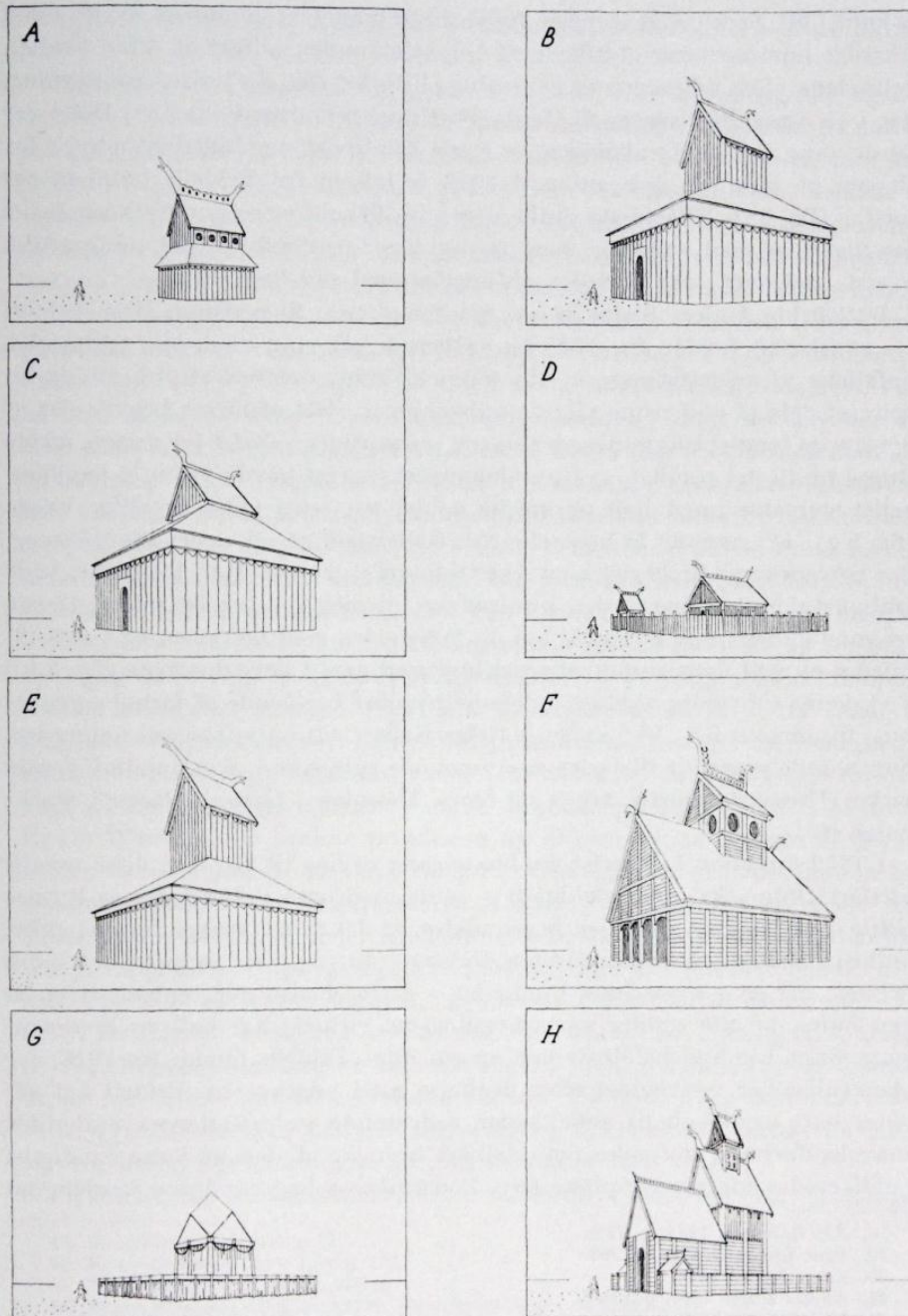


Fig. 5. Otte forslag til rekonstruktion af templet i Uppsala, gengivet i samme størrelsesforhold og set fra samme vinkel. A: Sune Lindqvist 1923(a). B: Gerda Boëthius 1931. C: Anders Bugge 1935. D: Åke Ohlmarks 1944. E: Sune Lindqvist 1944. F: Allan Fridell 1948. G: Anders Bugge 1950. H: Nils Gellerstedt 1950. Sammentegnet af Holger Schmidt. Jfr. iøvrigt note 35, side 132.

Fig. 116 Reconstruction attempts of the 'temple' at Uppsala. Source: Olsen 1966: 133.

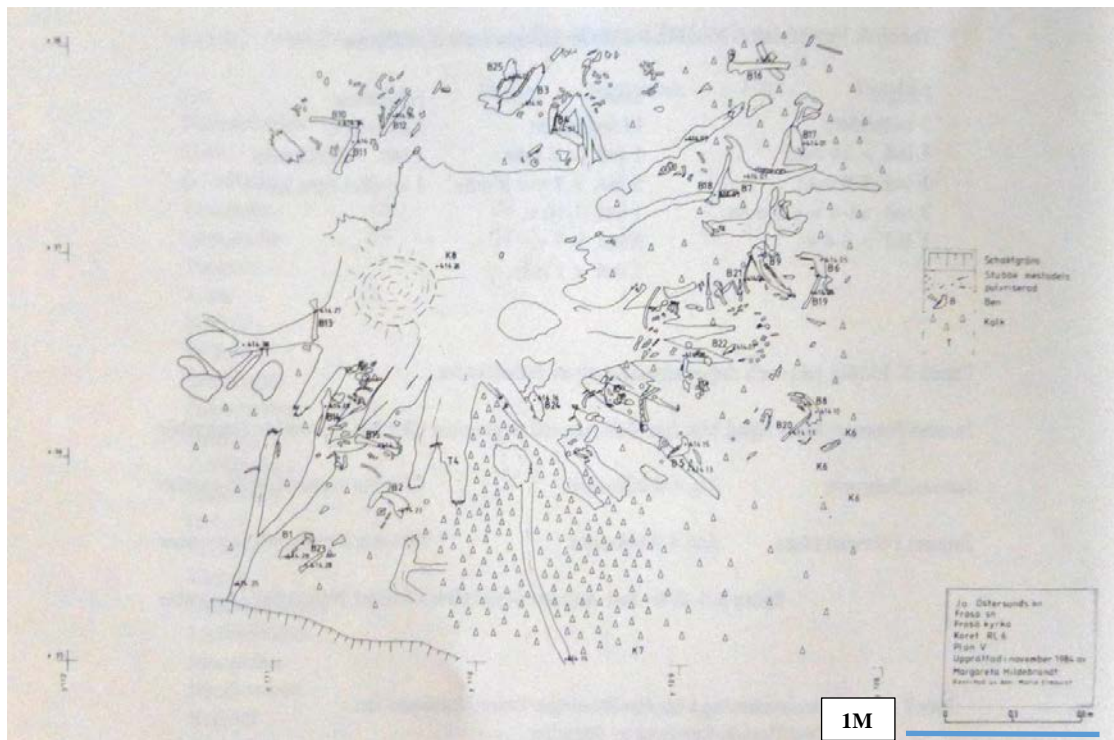


Fig. 117 Plan of Tree stump and bones at Frösön medieval church. Source: Iregren 1984:124. In the plan, the tree stump is in the centre. Surrounding it are 5 kg of various disarticulated animal skeletons (Iregren 1989: 120).

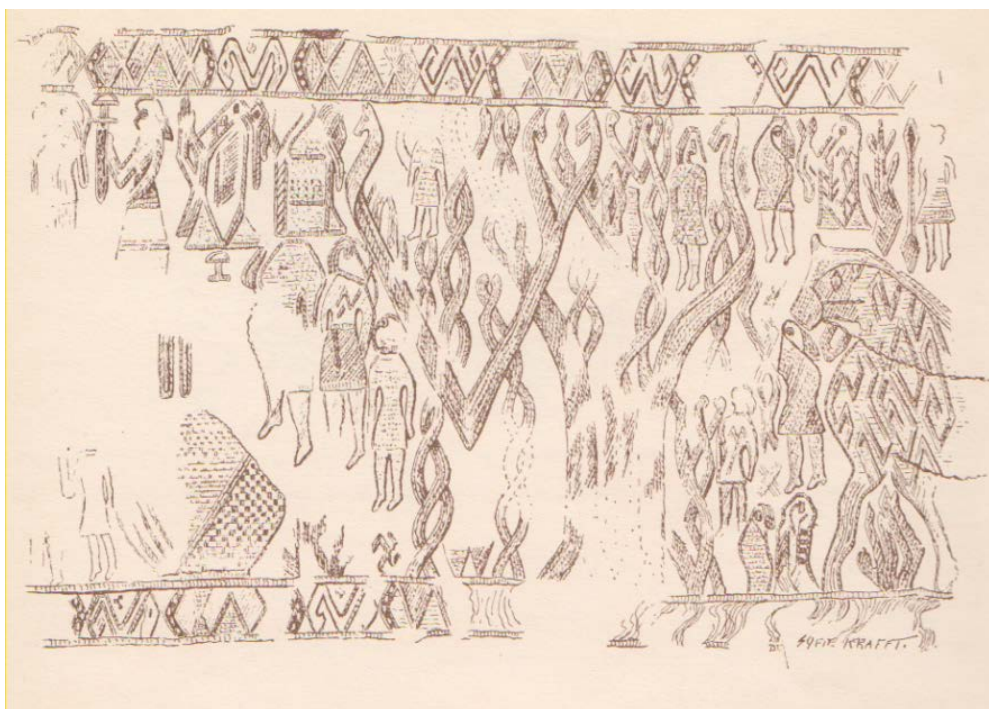


Fig. 118 Hanging sacrifices on the Oseberg tapestries. The un-flexed feet demonstrate that the victims are hanging. Photo source: Krafft 1956: 35 .



Fig. 119 The Lunda site from the air. Source: Andersson 2006: 196.

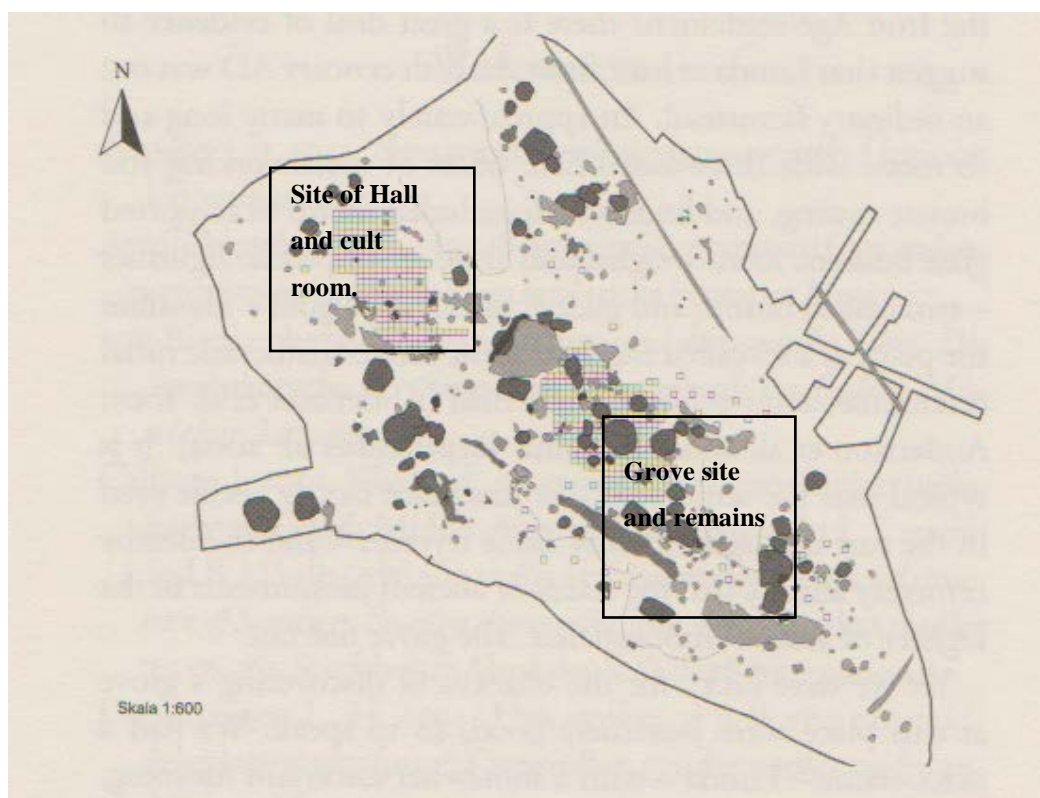
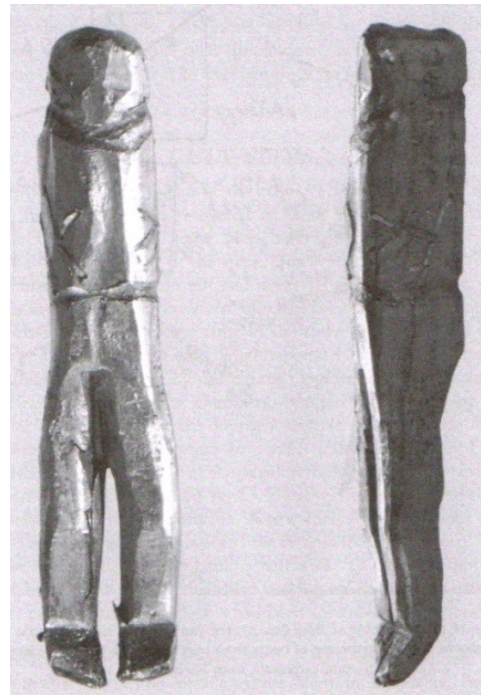


Fig. 120 Lunda site geological features and find locations. After Andersson 2006: 196



Close up of left gold phallic figure on the right is from Andersson et al, 2004. This shows the dangling feet of a hanged victim.

Fig. 121 Phallic figures found in Lund. HMS.



Fig. 122 Lilla Ullevi, Sweden, Stone platform. Photo source: <<http://www.dn.se/kultur-noje/kultplats-helgad-at-guden-ull-hittad-i-upplands-bro>> [Accessed 30 March 2016]

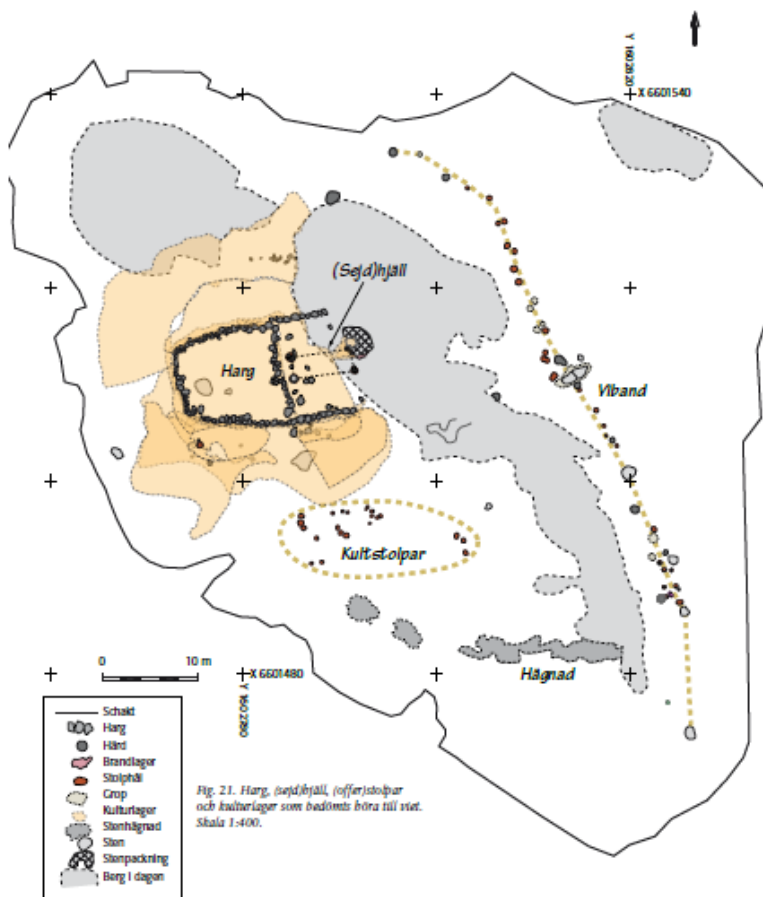


Fig. 123 Lilla Ullevi, site overview. Source: Bäck et al 2008:34



Fig. 124 Sample armband Lille Ullevi. Source: Bäck et al 2008:44.



Fig. 125 Aerial view of Lejre, with locations mentioned in the text. Source: Christiansen 2010: 241

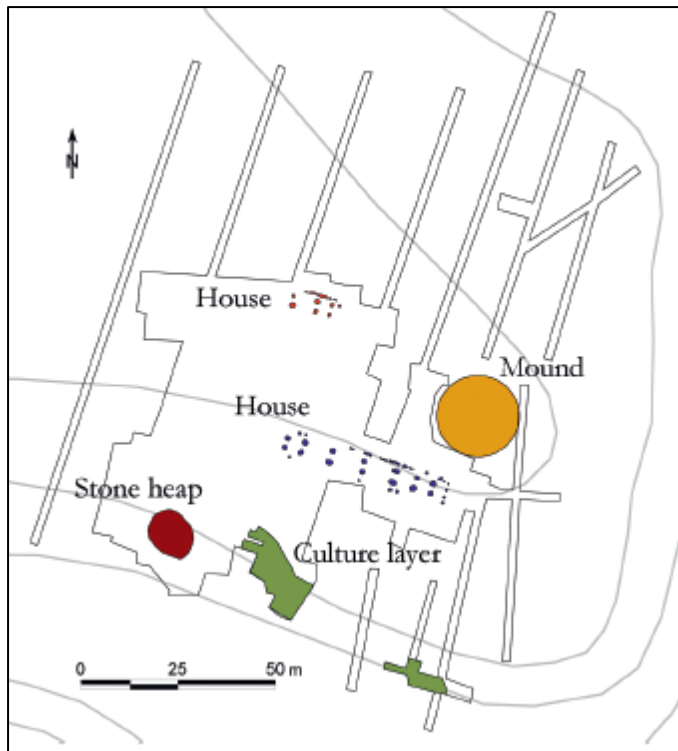


Fig. 126 Site overview of the Fredshøj excavation. Source: Christiansen 2010: 249.

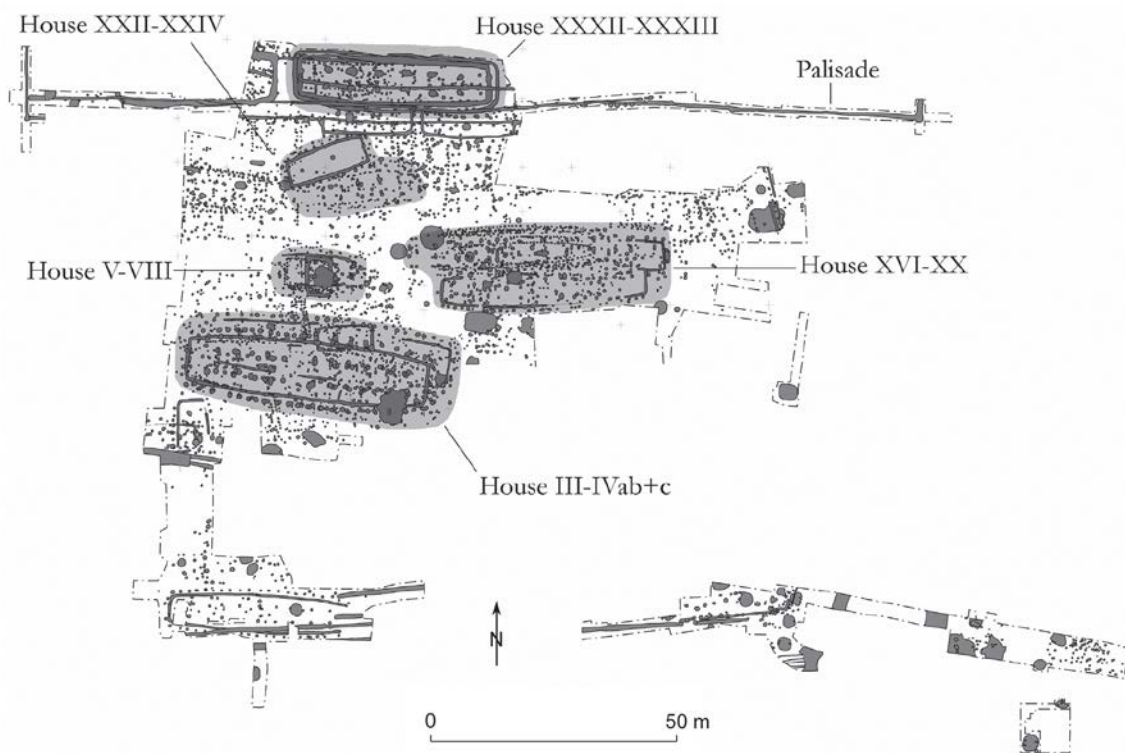


Fig. 127 Site overview of the structures at the Mysselhøjgård sites.

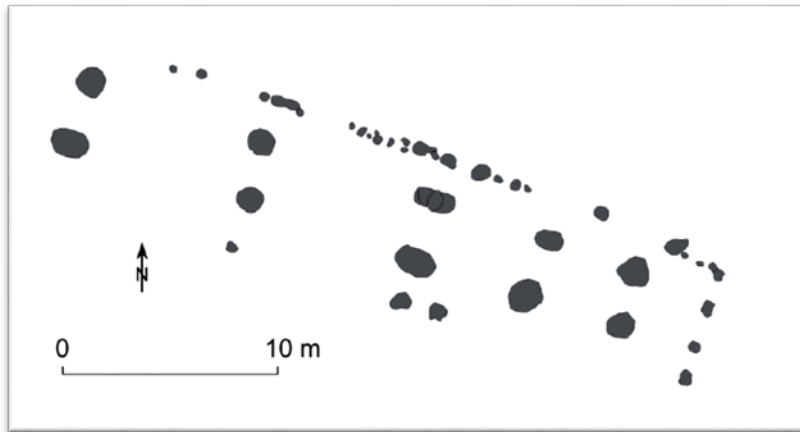


Fig. 128 Hall at Fredshøj site, Lejre. Source: Christiansen 2010: 249.

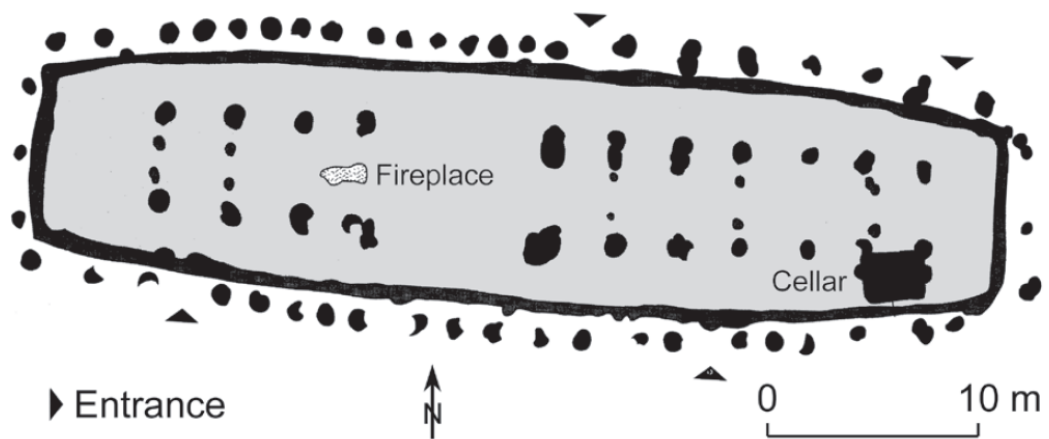


Fig. 129 The Lejre Hall. Source: Christiansen 2010: 244.



Fig. 130 The early medieval hall at Lejre, as it appears today



Fig. 131 Odin figurine in female clothing. FLM. Note the ravens to his right and left, as well as the poorly formed eye, wearing a dress. The statue suggests a confirmation of accusations recorded in the mythological literature accusing Odin of cross dressing (*Poetic Edda*, Lokasenna 24; Larrington 1996: 89; the practice is well recorded in shamanic practices).

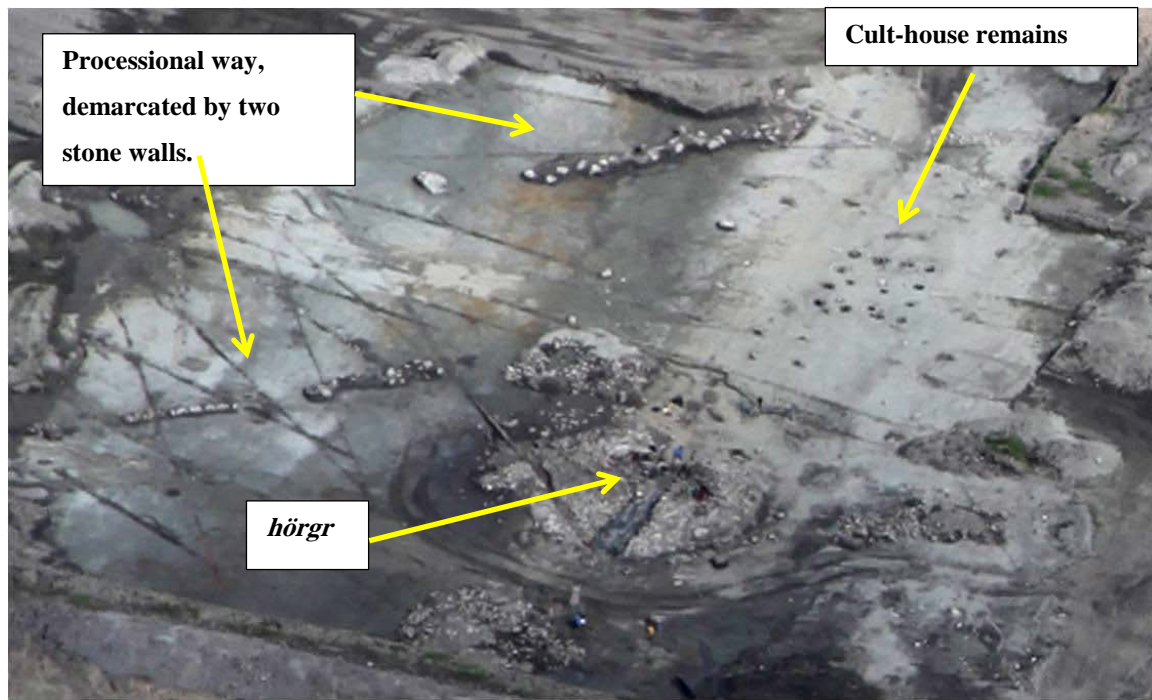


Fig. 132 Aerial view of the Gudehovet site. Photo courtesy of and used with permission by Preben Rønne of the Vitenskapsmuseet , University of Trondheim.

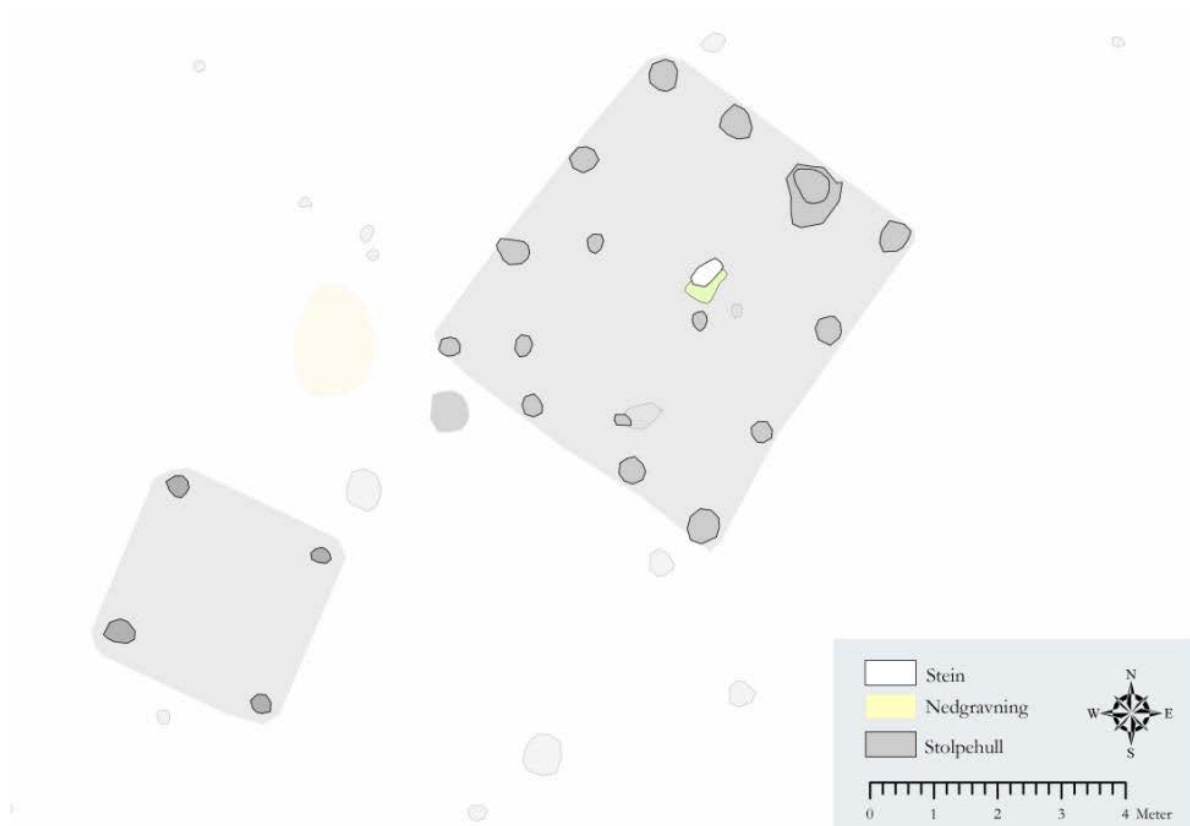


Fig. 133 Plan of Gudehovet cult-house. The scale metre reads 4 metres. Photo courtesy of and used with permission by Preben Rønne of the Vitenskapsmuseet , University of Trondheim.



Fig. 134 Gudehovet cult-house artistic reconstruction. Drawing courtesy of and used with permission by Preben Rønne of the Vitenskapsmuseet, University of Trondheim.

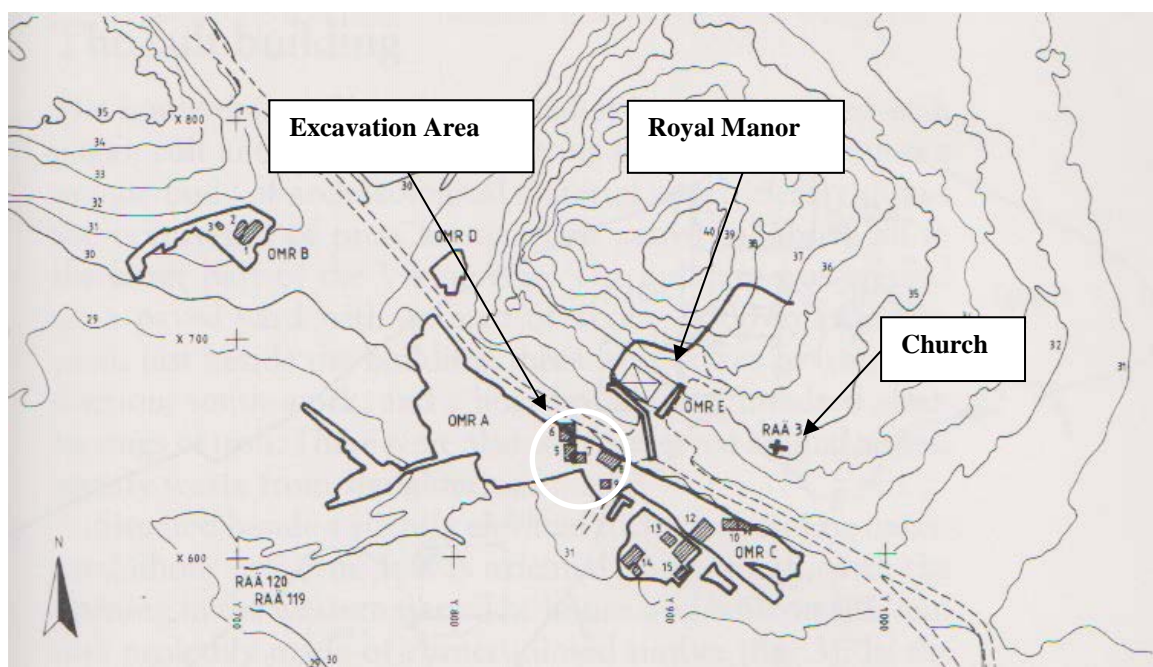


Fig. 135 Borg site overview. After Nielsen 1997: 379.

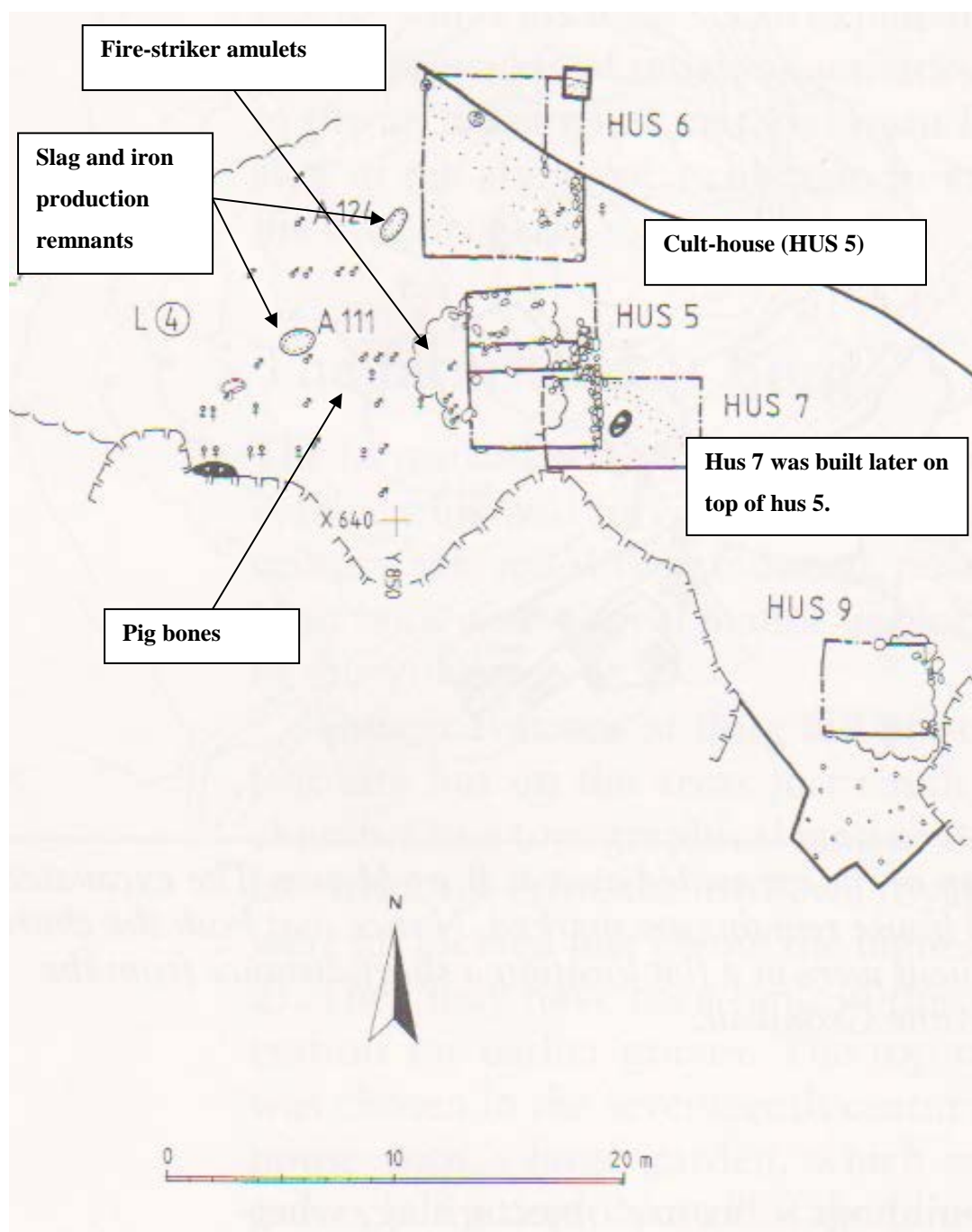
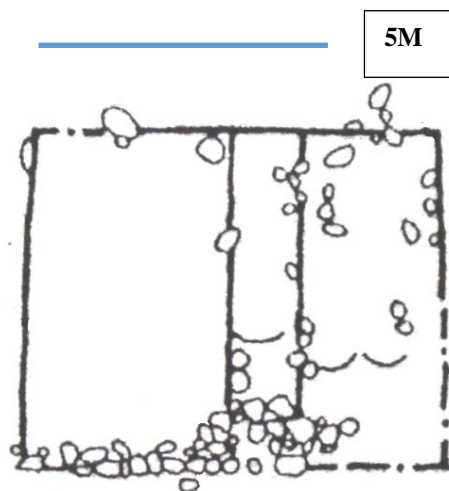


Fig. 136 Borg site and artefact detail. After Nielsen 1997 (secondary source: Gräslund 2008: 251).



5M

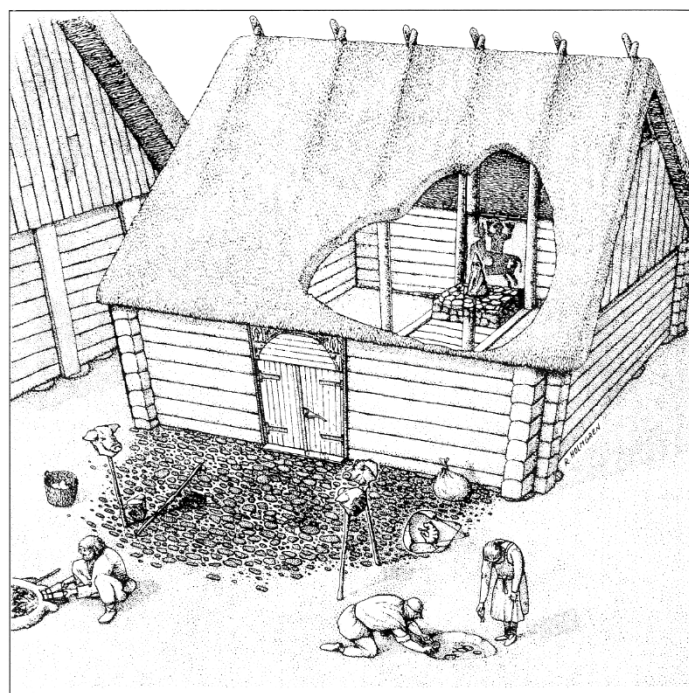


Fig. 137 Borg cult-house. The image on the left is from the excavation plan above. The reconstruction of the cult-house sources from Nielsen 1997: 388. It is suggested that the two rooms, based on the finds found near them, were divided between the gods Freya and Frey.

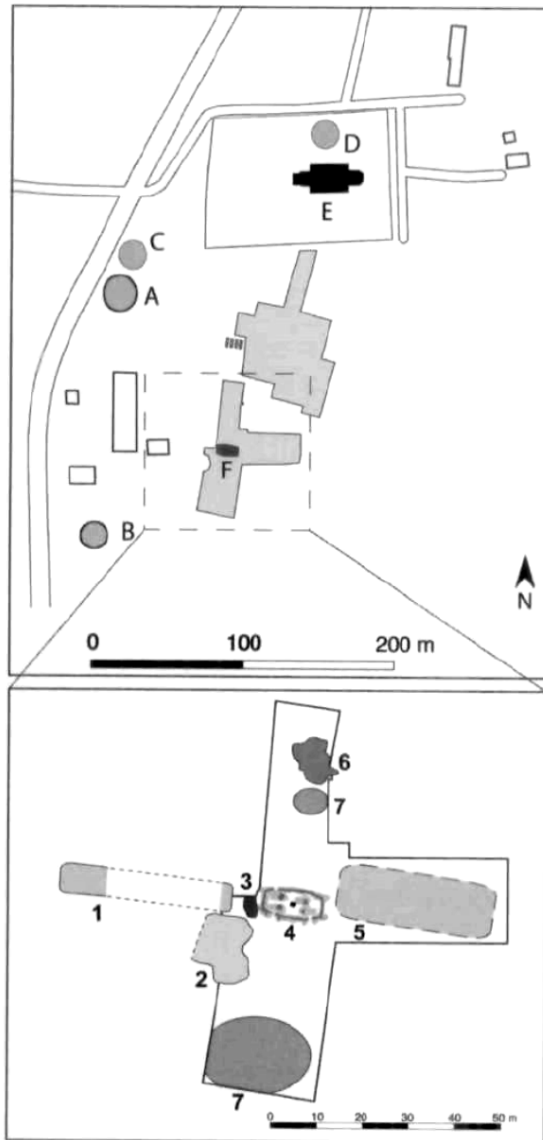


Figure 2. Above: The excavation areas within Uppåkra during the field campaigns 2001-2004 (grey shading). A-B: mounds; C-D: destroyed mounds; E: present church; F: the special building. Below: The location of features around the cultic building. 1: house partly excavated in 1934 and in 2006; 2: stone paving; 3: concentration of fire-cracked stones and bones; 4: the house sequences; 5: area with several long-houses; 6: concentrations of weapons; 7: sparse distribution of weapons

Fig. 138 Site overview, Uppåkra. Photo source: Larsson 2007:14.



Fig. 139 Aerial view of Uppåkra cult-house. Source: (summer 2001) Larsson 2004: 4.



Fig. 140 The Uppåkra "Odin" figure. HML. The image on the left is the figure as excavated (photo by the author). The image on the right is a reconstruction of its original appearance. Source: <http://www.uppakra.se/backup/eng/foremalen_eng.htm> [Accessed 21 February 2012]

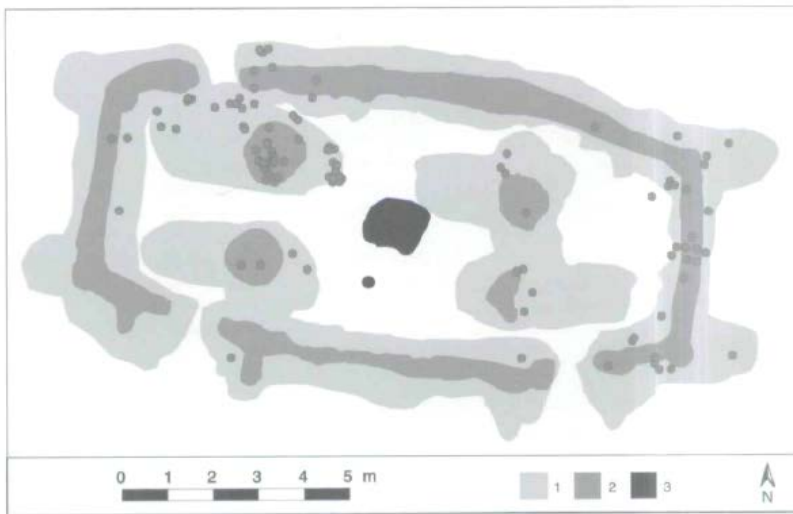


Fig. 141 Uppåkra cult-house, *guldgubber* finds shown as dots. Source: Larsson 2006: 249.



Fig. 142 Uppåkra cult-house reconstruction.
Source: <http://www.uppakra.se/backup/eng/maktcentrum_eng.htm> [Accessed 1 March 2012]. Note that the roof, gables, and even the dragon heads are based on stave church construction. This is conjecture not directly supported by the excavation find



Fig. 143 Tisso site with details on discoveries. Source: Jørgensen, Lars. 2009: 343

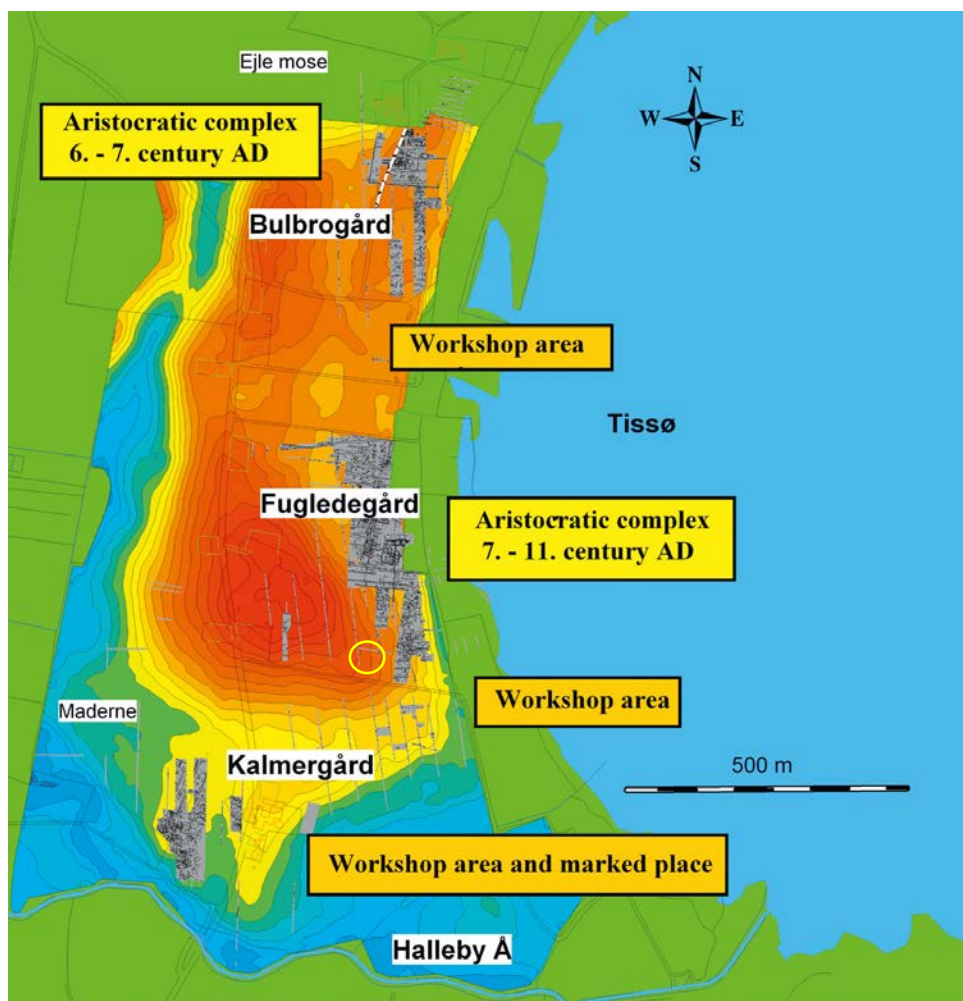


Fig. 144 Tissø site overview. Cultic area circled in yellow. After Franck Bican 2010: 149.

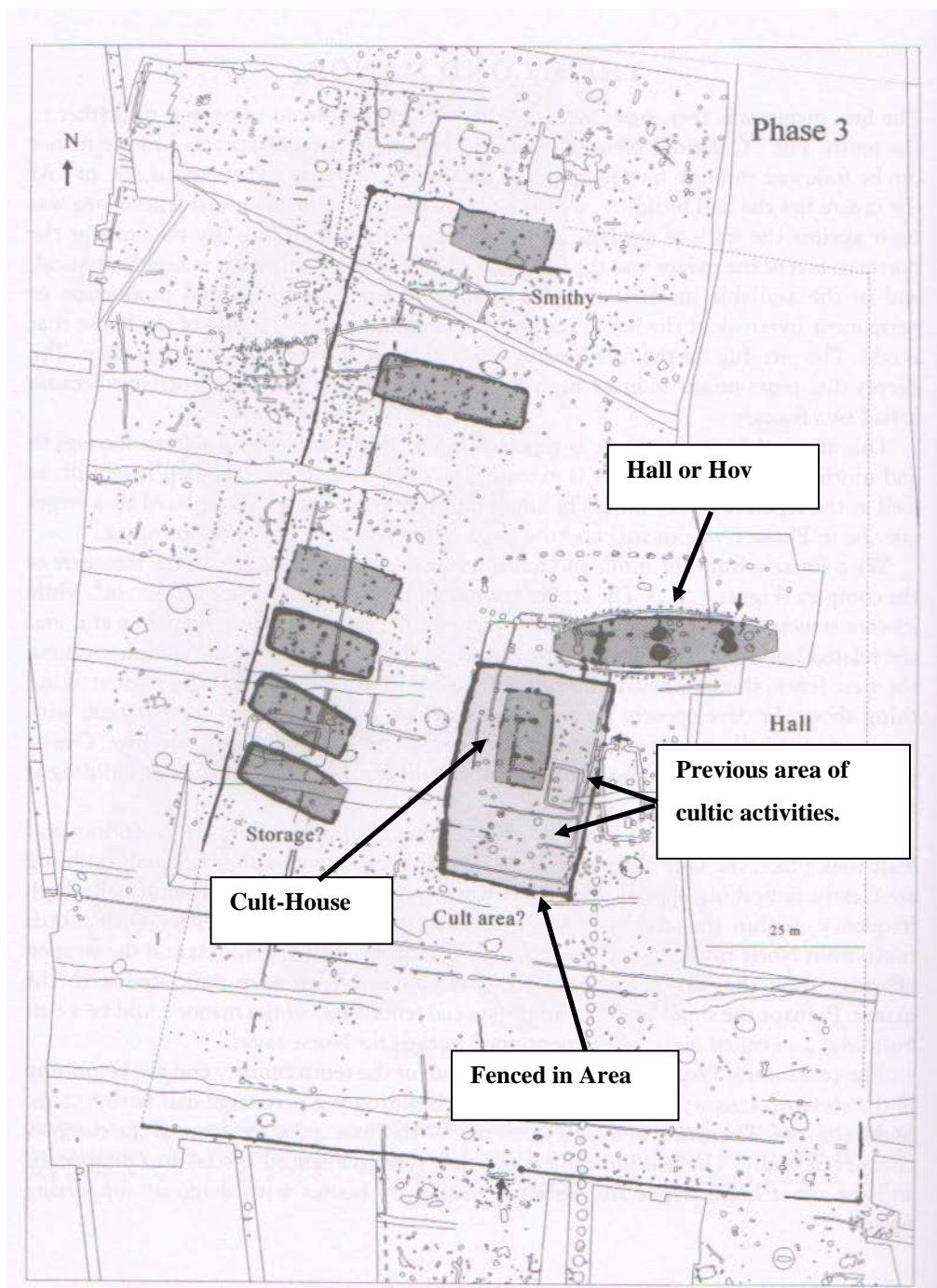
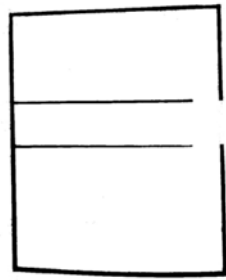


Fig. 145 Tissø site plan. After Jørgensen 2012: 80, with annotations

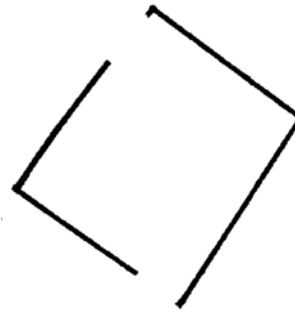
10M



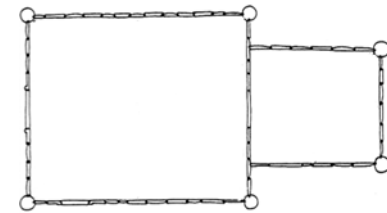
Fig. 146 Close up of Tissø ritual building in its last phase
Source: after Jørgensen 2012: 80.



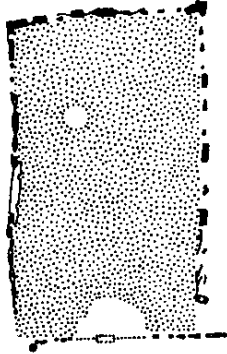
Borg Cult-House



Gudehovet Cult-house



Haltdalen Stave Church (after
Christie 1976:67).



Elisenhof House (Denmark)
House 29. Source: Schmidt 1994:
55.



Bennekom House, Gelderland
(Netherlands). Source: Hamerow
2004: 49.



Mid-11th century structures from the
Urmakaren block in Sigtuna (Sweden).
Source: Ros: 2012: 142.

Fig. 147 A comparison of Cult-House and Domestic Structures.

The images above are corrected for scale, and aligned with north on top. The cult-house images have been redrawn and schematized for clarity. For comparison purposes, a two-cell church (Haltdalen) is placed on top. It can be seen that although the hall-type pagan “temple” shares many similarities with halls, it shares virtually none with the two-cell church.

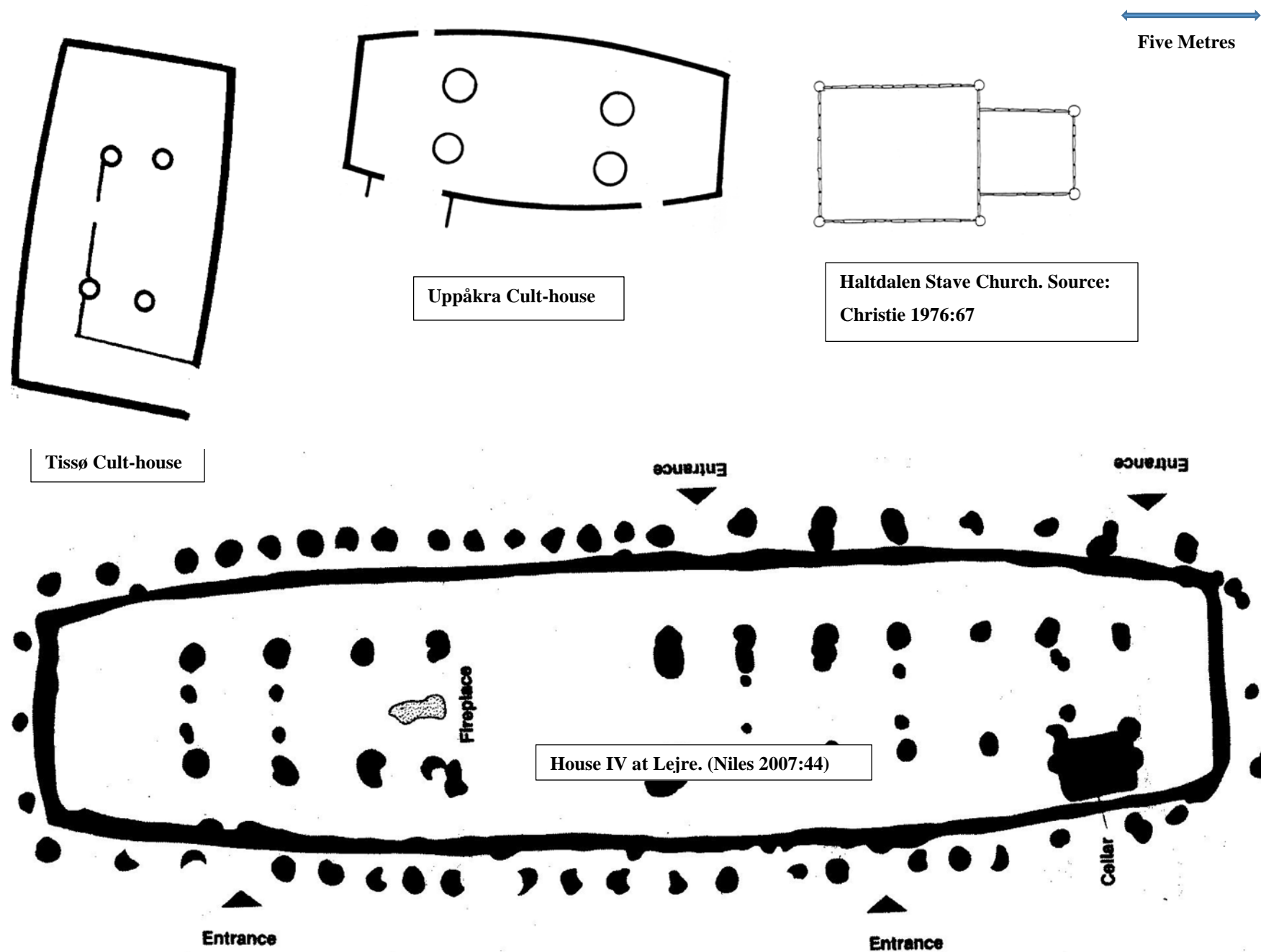


Fig. 148 Cult-house and hall comparison.

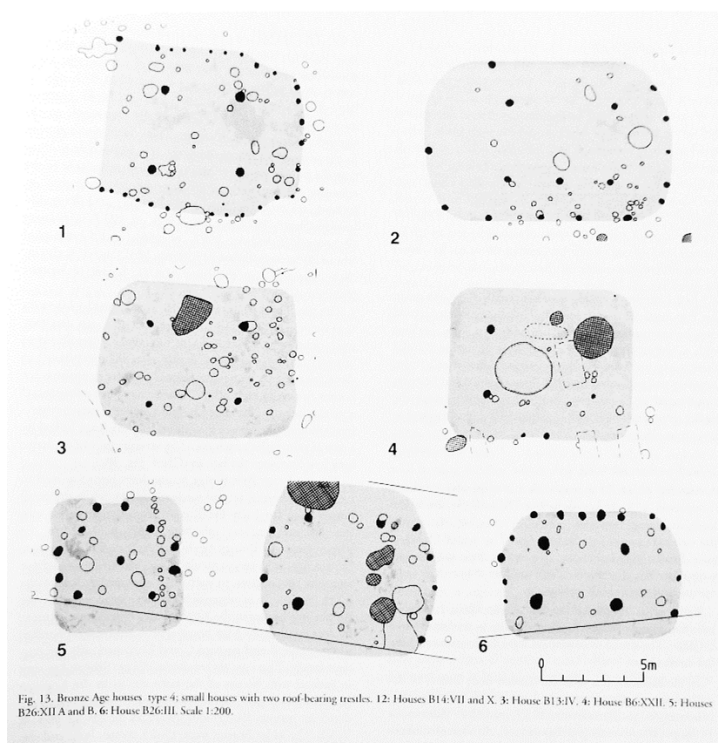
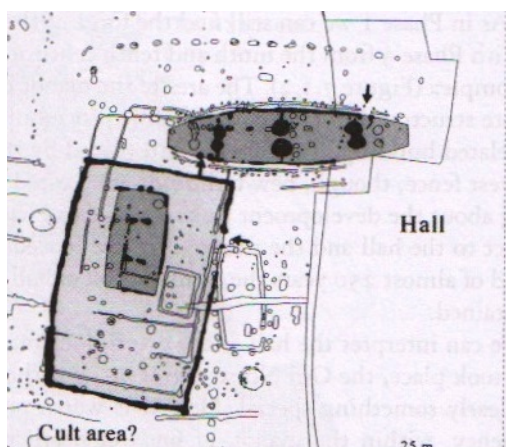
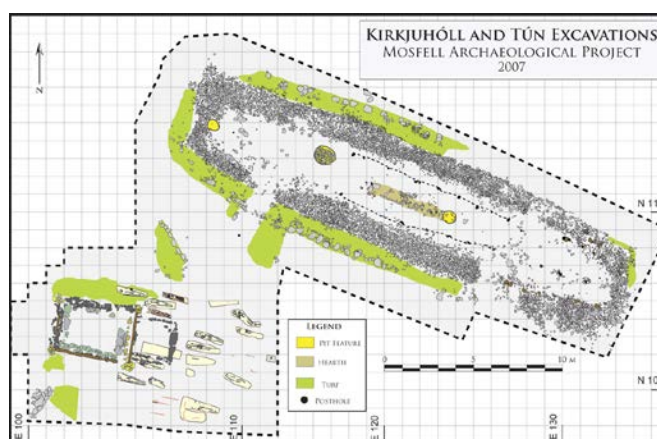


Fig. 149 Bronze Age type 4 structures from Sweden. Source: Tesch 1992: 309.

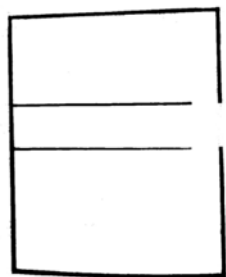


Tissø, Denmark, Cult-house..

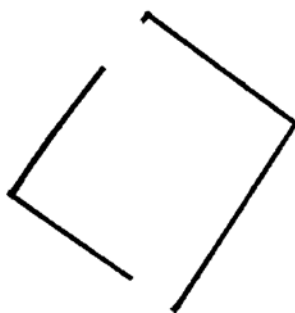


Mosfell Archaeological Project, Iceland.

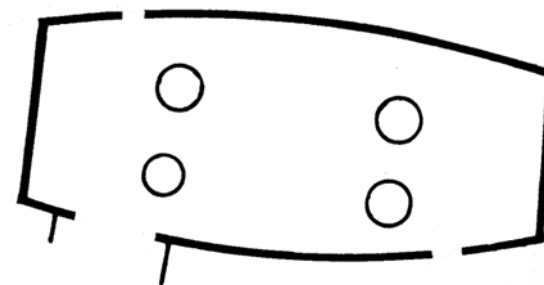
Fig. 150 Cult-house from Ragnarök to Rapture. The cult-house at Tissø is placed directly next to one end of the hall. This second image is of Hrisbru church from the Mosfell Archaeological Project in Iceland. Here the two-cell church is placed in a similar area. Source: Tissø Cult-house, Jørgensen 2012: 80. Mosfell Archaeological Project, site overview source: <http://www.viking.ucla.edu/mosfell_project/images/2007_hrisbru_excavations_large.gif> [Accessed 12 March 2013]. Used with permission from Jesse Byock.



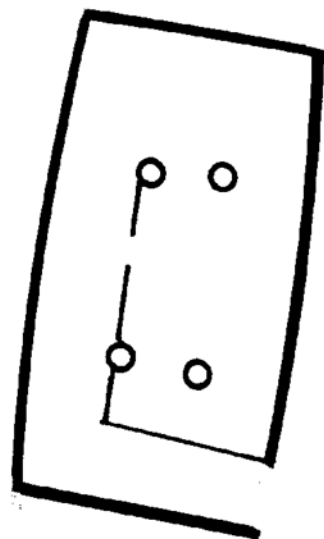
Borg Cult House



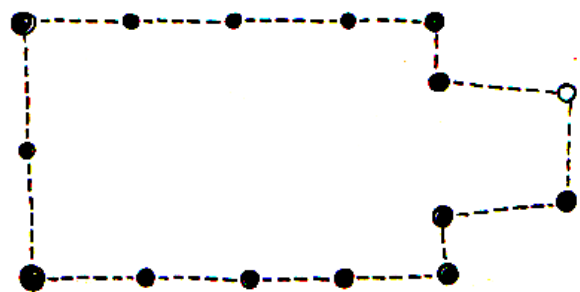
Gudehovet Cult-house



Uppåkra Cult-house

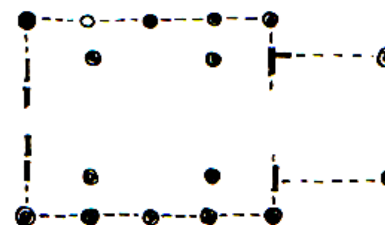


Tissø Cult-house



MÆRE

Mære Stave Church



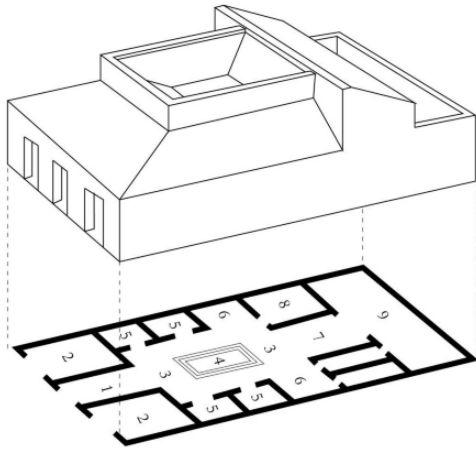
URNES

Urnes Stave Church



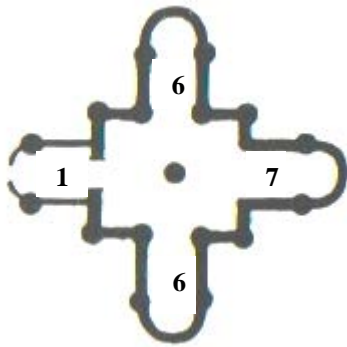
Five Meters

Fig. 151 Direct comparison of Cult-houses and Stave Churches



This is an idealized view of the *Domus Italica* as envisioned by Vitruvius.

Building floorplan is from Pompeii. Source: Kleiner 2014: Location 670, figure 5.1.



Compare this floor plan to Nore Stave Church. After Holan 1990: 119.

Fig. 152 Roman idealized structures

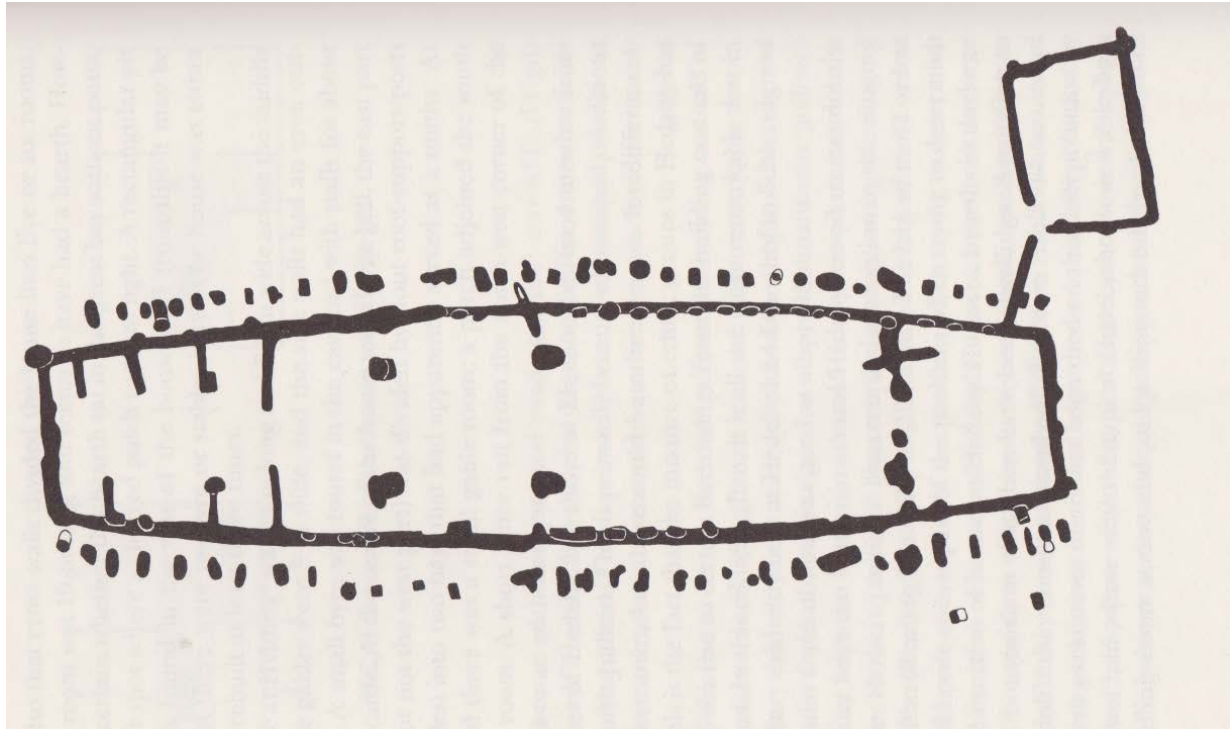


Fig. 153 Sample Viking Long-house. This example is from Hviding, Denmark. Source: Schmidt 1994: 57.